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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 08, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for December 08, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

**RADIKAL / HURRIYET:** The investigation into PKK/Kongra-Gel leader Zubeyir Aydar's allegations to Milliyet and Tercuman newspapers on August 21 and 22 that Abdullah Ocalan was leading the PKK/Kongra-Gel from his prison cell, was dropped when Istanbul Prosecutor's Office decided that no physical evidence proving a crime was found concerning the charges.

**ZAMAN:** Concerning the investigation into Zubeyir Aydar's remarks, Zaman daily reported that the jailed terrorist leader Abdullah Ocalan gave a half-page statement to the Istanbul Prosecutor as a witness during the investigation process. The daily further reported that Abdullah Ocalan did not clearly mention any formulation resembling the concept of overarching identity of citizenship of Turkey and sub-identities of different cultures within Turkey (see press summary 12/07).

**CNN TURK ONLINE**

([http://www.cnntrk.com/TURKIYE/haber\\_detay.a.sp?PID=319&HID=1&haberID=144489](http://www.cnntrk.com/TURKIYE/haber_detay.a.sp?PID=319&HID=1&haberID=144489)): According to a report of pro-PKK website of Firat News Agency, the U.S. was looking for ways to enable the return to Turkey of refugees in Mahmur camp, which was established 11 years ago in Iraq. A delegation formed by U.S. soldiers and civilians is reportedly paying visits to the camp to assess the situation there and to learn about the views of the camp residents about Abdullah Ocalan.

**ZAMAN:** Reportedly, the police found 250 grams of plastic explosives at the house of the Silopi municipality assembly member (from DEHAP), who was detained along with eight people during unannounced home raids conducted at three houses (see press summaries 12/06 and 07). Two of the people detained were alleged PKK members and the rest of the detainees reportedly aided and harbored the terrorist organization PKK.

**ZAMAN:** National Security Directorate increased the security threat level in the nation's 81 security director headquarters against any possible suicide bomb, bomb or gun attacks targeting the directorates.

**ZAMAN:** Reportedly, Supreme Court Chief Prosecutor issued a warning against the DTP (Democratic Society Party), which elected two persons for party chairmanship. According to the Political Parties Act of Turkey, a political party can have only one national chairperson. The Prosecutor also warned DTP that former DEP (Democracy Party) deputies Leyla Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Dogan and Selim Sadak cannot be a member to political party because of the previously given verdict banning these people from political life.

**ZAMAN / HURRIYET:** Opposition parties criticized PM Erdogan's recently uttered remarks saying, "Democracy and religion are helpful in attaining a peaceful environment...Religion is the glue that held the ethnic components (within a society) together." According to CHP (Republican People's Party) National Leader, PM Erdogan "lost his bearings" and started a perilous, controversial and an endless religious debate. According to Baykal, PM Erdogan, upon seeing that his formulations stressing the ethnic identities rather than a single national identity proved weak and were not very welcomed, now resorted to the concept of religion, which would reportedly disorient him more. Separately, Zaman reported that CHP leader would visit Hakkari's Semdinli and Yuksekova districts this morning to examine the situation there. Baykal will go to Van and Malatya provinces later.

**OZGUR GUNDEM:** A local court brought a civil action and fined Sukran Aydin, the Bismil Mayor of Diyarbakir, because Aydin greeted the public with a Kurdish word during her address to a crowd in 2002 at Diyarbakir's Kulp district. Aydin will have to pay approximately 1100 USD. Reportedly, DEHAP Deputy National Chairperson Ali Urkut made a speech in Zaza language on the same day; however, no action was brought against him, said the newspaper.

**RADIKAL:** Third Court of First Instance in Ankara approved the regulation that banned the use of Kurdish during political activities of the political parties. The regulation stipulates that no other language than Turkish will be used during the

political activities of the parties.

RADIKAL: Mikail Ilcin, leader of Hani clan and former Hakkari deputy from CHP (Republican People's Party), said during a press announcement yesterday that a Kurdish state must be founded in northern Iraq. Ilcin reportedly praised Massoud Barzani, leader of the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party), during his announcement.

OZGUR GUNDEM: A large-participation press announcement will be held on December 10 World Human Rights Day in Hakkari's Semdinli district. DTP delegates, SHP (Social Democratic Populist Party) municipality assembly members, KESK (Confederation of Public Employees' Unions), Umut Bookstore, Human Rights Association representatives and Chamber of Tradesmen and Artisans will form a platform in Semdinli to make a press announcement and to draw attention to their commitment to follow the developments on the case.

OZGUR GUNDEM: A Culture and Arts Association in Istanbul used a logo published on Ozgur Gundem newspaper, and designed a key holder which carried the logo with a statement on it saying, "Semdinli Bomb, Do not forget it, Watch out!" The association members said that, this key chain, while expressing their protests and reaction against the Semdinli case, will help keep the memory of the incidents fresh on the minds of the people.

OZGUR GUNDEM: "Delegation of Citizens", which went to Semdinli to conduct studies there, returned to Istanbul to talk about their Semdinli observations. Professor Gencay Gursoy, Chairperson of the Istanbul Chamber of Doctors, said that Kurdish people demanded peace, justice, identity rights and freedom. During the meetings held with citizens in Hakkari, Semdinli, Yuksekova and Van, the first and foremost demand of the people was to make their voices heard, not silenced, said Gursoy.

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